

The BEACON

FOR SCHOOL AND HOME

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DECEMBER 24, 1922

The Happy Pine

BY NELLIE BAILLOU

ROGER and Amelia could have no Christmas tree. They had moved to a neighborhood where people do not spend money for things like that. Their Daddy and Mother were careful and a little worried this year. The children did not talk much about new toys; and they wore their old winter coats cheerfully to Sunday School.

They were playing about under a scrubby little pine tree that someone had planted long ago in front of their shabby brown house. It was the only tree in the neighborhood; the people of Lingurd Flat did not often plant trees or take care of them.

This one had been bent and broken, but still it lived on, a cheerful cripple. Its head bowed far over the crooked stem, and it had a funny branch like an elbow on the opposite side. It looked like a friendly, tall person bending down to hear what a little one is saying. At least it looked that way to Amelia, and Roger agreed with her.

"This is *our* Christmas tree, sister!" he laughed. "We aren't likely to have any other, this year."

"It *is* a Christmas tree!" Amelia said in surprise. "Somehow I never thought of it in that way before. Let's decorate it right where it stands."

The children fell to work. They made pretty, bright figures out of what scraps of colored paper they could find. One by one, the other children of the neighborhood came by, and when they saw what was going on, stayed to help.

"Do you care if I call it *my* tree, too?" asked a raggedy little girl. "You see, I never had a Christmas tree in all my life."

"Neither did I have!" said the busy children one by one.

"I wish it would be the prettiest one in town!" shouted cheerful little Isador. "Then the prize would

be ours."

"What prize?" the children stopped a moment to ask.

"The one our teacher told us about. The people that own the newspaper said that they would give a prize to the best tree in town. That's all."

The children looked at their tree solemnly.

"It's lovely—but the other trees will have shiny stuff all over them," Amelia sighed. "It's no use to hope. But we like it just the same."

"They'll put the best tree's picture in the paper, too," Isador continued. "I'd sure like to have a picture of this one, out doors where everybody can see it."

"Some people pull down their shades on Christmas Eve," the raggedy little girl complained, "and a body can't see a bit

of the tree. Now we want everybody to see ours."

"Let's put a sign on it!" shouted Roger.

So they printed carefully, "THIS TREE BELONGS TO EVERYBODY WHO SEES IT." And they hung the card to the tree's funny elbow.

After that, people going by stopped and smiled, and read the card and smiled again, as they saw the decorations of colored paper.

One woman called Amelia to her and gave her a whole quart of cranberries to string for the tree. A newsboy, on his route, fumbled in his pockets and found a wad of silver paper he had saved from candy and kodak film wrappings.

"I'll tell the paper to send the judges around to your—I mean *our*—tree," he said. "Here, catch this!"

Roger caught the paper, and they made a big star and seven half moons.

Toward Christmas Eve it grew colder, and there was a damp chill in the air. Folks hurried by with their collars turned up about their ears. But not one, except a poor old blind man, missed seeing the pine tree in its brave colors.

As night came on, the children all hurried home, shivering in their thin, shabby clothes, wishing they could take the tree with them. And more than a hundred people *did* take that tree home in their thought and talked about it, and enjoyed it.

There were sixty-nine Christmas trees on the judges' list. From one to another they rushed in their big automobile—to school-rooms, and Sunday Schools, and rich homes, and even to toy-stores. At last, in the icy storm that wrapped the town, the big machine began to skid and slide.

"No more tonight, comrades!" said the head judge. "How many more are left to see?"

"Just one—over in Lingurd Flat, out of doors."

"Let it go!" urged another man, shivering, as the sleet struck like glass on



BRINGING HOME A CHRISTMAS TREE

Photograph by Eugene J. Hall

the side of the car. "Give it to one of the Sunday Schools and let it go!"

"My boy helped decorate his Sunday School tree, and I don't think he'd want to see it win by cheating anybody, any more than he'd want to win a basket ball game by cheating. I'm going to Lingurd Flat."

"Sure!" said the rest of the judges, and the shivering man said it louder than any of them.

In the darkness of the storm, they could see nothing in the miserable door-yards.

The head judge, following a gleam of light from the window of the house where Roger and Amelia lived, went there to ask how to find the Tree. The children were not yet in bed, and they tugged on their coats, and anxiously tagged at his heels, as he started back to turn the searchlight of his car on the tree.

The white shaft of light struck the little pine trees into blinding brightness. Every branch, every needle, shone with ice-points. The silver half-moons were diamond-covered. The colored papers were only the hearts of crystal baubles. Even the cheerful card on the Tree, hanging from the crooked elbow, was glazed with ice, and had a fringe of tiny icicles hanging down. But the words were still plain, "THIS TREE BELONGS TO EVERYBODY WHO SEES IT."

"Say, we've found something!" exclaimed the head judge.

"You're right!" shouted the rest.

"Who owns this tree?" the big man asked Roger and Amelia.

"All of us—the children from all around, who helped fix it, and people who went by, and the newsboy, and everyone," Roger said.

"Oh, our tree! Our tree!" Amelia nearly sobbed, for it was so beautiful and surprising in the light, all lit up with glory.

"The orders are for us to find the *best* tree," said the judge, and I award the prize to this one. Here is the money in this envelope, to be delivered on Christmas Eve. Tomorrow the newspaper man will be around early to take the picture."

Amelia took the envelope unbelievingly, and looked at Roger. They whispered together for a moment, and then Amelia handed it back to the judge.

"Please, sir, won't you buy a party with it, for all of them when they come to see it in the morning? Something nice to eat—they would like that best!"

"You aren't going to keep the money, then?"

"Why, no. Roger and I didn't win the prize. *Everybody* did. Everybody owns it. And God put on the decorations that made it the prettiest one in town."

"You are right," said the judge gravely. "That is the kind of a tree God wants for his Son's birthday—one that belongs to all. No wonder He hung the ice upon it Himself—like a blessing."

The children could hardly sleep for

pure happiness that night. By dawn they were up, and calling for all to see the miracle of the tree that was made beautiful in the night.

The dull houses were softened and made quaint by eaves of drooping icicles. The telephone wires were cables of glass.

Children came slipping and sliding from every direction. The sun shone, brightly lighting up the tree, and the queerly changed street, and the happy faces of the Owners of the Tree.

And while they were singing and frisking about, a huge sleigh drove up the icy way, driven by a little man in red, with white whiskers. Beside him sat a big man. And behind him in the sleigh, was a stack of boxes and bundles.

Out they sprang, and began carrying the packages toward the tree. The children shyly crowded nearer.

When the little pine tree gleamed above a mound of gay bundles, the big man made a speech. He told how the tree had been the best in the whole town because it was for everybody, and how the storm had dressed it more beautifully than the most skillful hands could do, as if God Himself loved the crooked little tree laden with a spirit of kindness.

And after that there were cakes and sweets for everybody, and even the rich people heard of the tree and drove to Lingurd Flat to see it before the sun could melt the ice.

"That is the best Christmas tree in town!" all agreed.

About the Snow of the Arctic Regions

BY FRANCES MARGARET FOX

WHEN Laura asked what we knew about snow at the North Pole and said that she believed that the snow there is different, we were inclined to laugh. However, as Laura is a well-informed little girl who never asks foolish questions, the entire family looked into the matter. There was nothing, though, in all the available books of reference that gave exact information about the snow that falls in the Arctic regions.

At last, an answer to Laura's question has been found in a fascinating book which was published in England in 1920. This book is called Elgie's Weather Book, and in the chapter on snow it is explained that snow is formed in the atmosphere from condensed vapor, just as raindrops are formed, only, the temperature of the atmosphere must be below freezing to make snow. And snowflakes, as we see them falling are not formed in their exquisite shapes the minute the vapor begins to freeze, but change into these shapes by further condensation. A flake of snow might have fallen as a raindrop you see, but the water which is condensed from the vapor in the atmosphere, was frozen, and this frozen vapor changed again into a beautiful snow crystal. In Elgie's Weather Book our snowflakes are

spoken of so beautifully as "snow-stars!"

Then comes the answer to Laura's question. The Weather Book tells us in so many plain words that "At very low temperatures snow does not fall in ordinary flakes, but as a sort of ice-powder, of whose terribly searching qualities in a strong wind Arctic travelers have had many a bitter remembrance." The author later refers to Arctic snowflakes as "the tiny spicules of the colder regions," and he refers to the experience of our Dr. Kane at the North Pole. Dr. Kane in the written accounts of his explorations says that when his men were thirsty they couldn't eat snow at times when the temperature was unusually low because the snow falling at such times caused the lips and tongue to bleed. Laura was right about it; snow is different at the North Pole.

Elgie's weather book calls our attention to a fact we must all have noticed for ourselves, and that is that the warmer the temperature of the atmosphere in a snowstorm, the bigger are the snowflakes; so the little girl was right in reasoning that in snowstorms in the Arctic regions the snowflakes are different because the atmosphere conditions are different. The terrible cold up there changes and changes the frozen vapor until when the snow falls at last, it is "ice-powder."

A Christmas Tale

BY DOROTHY E. COLLINS

HE made his way from town to town. On a winter's day, long, long ago. The road was white, the trees were brown.

And the four winds flickered to and fro. He asked a beggar beside a wall. Why tapers burned upon each sill. Said the beggar, "'Tis Christmas evening, and all

The people have gone to the Singing Hill.

When the Christ-child comes they will laugh and sing.

Hark, you can hear them carolling."

Song:

Blue jewels does Mary wear,
Blue as the night:
But ah—but ah—beyond compare
His eyes are bright!

Deep, deep falls her hair
Deep as the night,
But ah—the child that slumbers there,
Hidden from sight.


"And you" he asked, "will you be there,
With happy men to rest your soul?"
The beggar said, "I've a child in care
And I must earn him a beggar's dole."
"Then go," said he, "sing up and down,
Sing a carol high, a carol low.
I'll beg instead through the lamp-lit town."

And the four winds flickered to and fro
While still the people carolled there
Softly and clear on the frosty air.

Roberta's Christmas Refugees

BY DAISY D. STEPHENSON

Part Two.



DR. True, a born leader in any emergency, was gone in an instant to direct the rescuing party of willing natives, most of whom were as much at home in the water as a school of porpoises. Excited, thrilled, and trembling with suspense, though in her heart she did not doubt the outcome even against such odds, Roberta's woes sank into insignificance and were forgotten as she and Muki hurriedly

made preparations for receiving any refugees that might come to them out of the storm. Not that Roberta was wholly content with such easy efforts. She longed to be out there encouraging the gallant work of the brown boys in their queer canoes. But she had just recovered from an illness and she knew what her Doctor daddy would think of so foolish a risk. Besides, for Duke and Sim, champion swimmers, and all the other fearless fellows, the wild surf had no terrors. It was a great game for them, with the saving of the passengers, at least, for their reward.

After a stiff fight the victors returned, leaving a sadly crippled craft, but bringing all hands to safety. The crew was made comfortable in plantation quarters, while Roberta and Muki welcomed with friendly solicitude the four sorry refugees with the Doctor—soaked, frightened, weary, but miraculously unharmed. There were two ladies, a girl, and a cheerful boy of about Roberta's age.

"Some little Christmas Eve celebration!" the boy remarked to Roberta, who had ushered his feminine companions into the bedrooms with ample dry clothing. "Here we sail out of Honolulu in Mrs. Herrick's yacht—she's the gray-haired one that's sickest,—bent on a Christmas call to the volcano. How do you pronounce it? Kil-au-ea?" he repeated after her with a grimace. "And we pretty near landed at the bottom of Davy Jones' locker! The Captain wanted to put into Lahaina this morning, but Mrs. Herrick was sure we could make Hilo." He paused with an embarrassed remembrance that he had not introduced himself. "Richard Drury, at your service the rest of my life, since you saved it,"

he assured the Doctor, boyishly, as he willingly accepted Muki's invitation to "chow."

Roberta was an efficient and consoling aid to the exhausted trio, who after partaking of some hot broth, had irresistibly dropped into wearied slumber, one by one. The girl with the pale face and the beautiful dark eyes occupied Roberta's own room. Roberta herself would curl up on the cot in the alcove off the living room. After supper the Doctor tramped off in the downpour to some patients, and Richard, after manfully striving to stifle prodigious yawns, gave it up and stumbled toward his berth in the little office.

"Just listen to that wind!" he shivered as he told his hostess good-night. "Glad I'm inside looking out. Never a sailor's life for me!" he vowed fervently. "I'm off the bounding main for life if I can choose good dry land instead." He turned back anxiously. "Sis sound asleep, you say? She's a dead game sport," he confided proudly, "but seasick? Oh, boy! I bet she'll take root and refuse to budge when we hit *terra firma* again!"

Roberta retired, too, soon after her father returned from his rounds. It had been a depressing day, ending in the excitement of unexpected guests for Christmas. "No decorations, no big dinner," she laughed softly as she closed the little piano and patted the violin on the cabinet. That instrument was old and precious, a family treasure handed down from a talented ancestor. As she lay drowsily listening to the thunder of the surf, the beating of the rain, she wondered whether the girls could possibly be as disappointed as she was. Yet, the strangers under the shelter of her roof gave her an unexpected interest. Who were they, anyway? She hoped the girl would feel like getting up for breakfast. "Maybe if we all turn to and try, we'll make something out of Christmas after all," she decided hopefully with one last yawn.

* * *

"Thank goodness it has stopped raining! Now I'll confer with Muki about three meals today, and see what is left in the garden that might make us look a little merrier inside," was Roberta's first thought as she rose early and dressed quickly for action. The spider lilies, and the golden alamanda cups were crushed and scattered, but joyously Roberta gathered an armful of the hardy lantana, "rainbow flower" of the islands. She tripped across the broad lanai (porch) to the front door, entered and stood transfixed at what she heard. She could hardly believe that wondrous melody came from her own violin. Spellbound, she listened, then moved noiselessly nearer till she could see the slim girl, her cloud of dark hair framing her white face with the dreamy black eyes.

The exquisite music died away and as Roberta hurried impulsively in with her posies the boy exclaimed, "Good for you,

sis! No salt water in those tones! Say, that's some violin, isn't it?"

Caressing the instrument gently, the girl met Roberta's rapt gaze. At that moment the bedroom door opened and the stately mother appeared with gracious greeting. The boy was instantly on his feet, leading her toward the Doctor who had risen courteously. "Dr. True, you haven't really met my mother? Oh, and Miss True is here! My mother, Mrs. Dunreith, and my sister, Alicia. I don't imagine conventions were observed last night," he laughed.

Roberta dropped her flowers and turned to the smiling girl with incredulous eyes and outstretched hands. "Why, then you—you're the violinist I anticipated hearing in Honolulu!" she cried with wide eager eyes. "Oh, daddy!" she was breathless and glowing. "She's here! And on Christmas morning! Aren't we the luckiest?" Then with a puzzled expression she accused the boy, "But your name is Richard Drury!"

"I'm only a step-son," he expressed regretfully, adding, "but that's not my fault. It's my misfortune."

* * *

A magical, musical Christmas it turned out to be at the plantation. With gracious generosity the talented trio outdid Tommy Tucker who merely sang for his supper, and strove to repay the hospitality of their hosts. Mrs. Dunreith sang in a marvelous clear soprano, while Richard accompanied his mother and sister perfectly. The yacht would not be sea-worthy till after repairs in dry dock; but the Doctor learned that the Mauna Kea would make its regular trip from Hilo to Honolulu the following morning. That would enable the musicians to arrive in time for their scheduled concert, and both Roberta and the Doctor were to go with them.

"I can just picture Annette when she gets my wireless," laughed Roberta, slipping out with her father a minute as he smoked his after supper cigar. "All the crowd will be at the pier with alohas and leis! I hope I don't strut, daddy dear, when I walk down, the gangplank with Alicia, but I'm afraid I shall!" Then as the strains of "Holy Night" floated out, "Come on in for some old English carols," she urged. "A good night concert by eminent artists right under our own vine and fig tree! That was a pretty lucky kona storm for us after all, wasn't it, daddy?"

The Real Christmas

BY ELIZABETH WEST PARKER

WHEN I was a little boy I used to think that Christmas was just outside things, like toys and trees And gifts from Santa Claus.

But now that I am quite grown up I know that these are only part; The real Christmas is inside me,—Joy, singing in my heart.



THE BEACON CLUB

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OUR MOTTO: Let your light shine.

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Writing a letter for this corner makes you a member of The Beacon Club. Address, The Beacon Club, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Box 45,
NORTH BILLERICA, MASS.

Dear Miss Buck:—When you came to Billerica to speak before the Woman's Alliance on the "Leadership of Jesus," I attended and enjoyed it very much. A school chum of mine enjoyed your talk so much that she joined our Sunday School. November 19 our church gave a pageant, celebrating the one hundredth anniversary of the organizing of the school. It was written by one of our members and proved a great success. It is my desire to join the Beacon Club.

Sincerely yours,
DORIS J. STOWERS.

29 RAMONA AVENUE,
COLORADO SPRINGS, COLO.

Dear Miss Buck:—I can hardly wait till Sunday to get my Beacon. I am seven years old and am in the second grade. I go to the Unitarian Sunday school. My teacher's name is Miss Nightingale. I would like very much to become a member of the Beacon Club.

Yours truly,
HENRY REHM.

Christmas Candles

WHEN the Christ-child comes again
Softly down the street to-night,
Twinkling through the window-pane
Let our candles shed their light.

Though the clouds are dark above
And the golden stars are dim,
We can tell him of our love
If we set a light for him.

Oh, the blessed Christ-child dear,
In his robe of shining white,
Let our candles give him cheer
As he passes by to-night!

—Evaleen Stein.

Church School News

THE Second Parish (Unitarian) Church of Worcester, Mass., has a fine school of 175 members. Its Superintendent is Miss Anna B. Carter, who is also the parish worker. On a report issued with the calendar for November 5th, the list of eighteen classes and teachers in the school with the books used by each is given, and the names of 6 substitute teachers. One remarkable feature of the printed report is a list of the names of 62 pupils in the school who had perfect attendance during the month of October.

The Unitarian church school at Rochester, New York, Miss Anna V. M. Jones, Superintendent, celebrated its 80th anniversary on October 29th. A printed program gave the words of the hymns and the titles of tableaux which made up the first part of the program, and a list of the characters in the dramatization which showed character and service in a modern liberal church. The tableaux in the

first section showed the growth of freedom and fellowship. Members of the classes represented a scene from the time of Jesus, A. D. 20, the young people's club presented Anne Askew at her trial in 1546, a martyr to individual freedom in religion. The third scene, by Junior classes, entitled "A Quest for Religious Freedom," represented Pilgrims going to church in 1620, and the fourth picture by the Senior classes showed the Parliament of Religions at the Columbian Exposition in 1893, with representatives of many forms of faith as illustrating world fellowship in religion. The pageant in which nine of the pupils of the school took part was adapted from the book, "Mr. Friend O' Man" by J. T. Stocking. Sixty-eight persons in all took part in these representations and the whole program was presented with wonderful spirit and understanding.

At Louisville, Ky., Mrs. Algernon S. Smith, field worker for the Department of Religious Education, has been working with the officers and teachers of the school to bring it to a higher grade of efficiency. The school is thoroughly organized and well graded. The calendar of the church, in speaking of the school, says: "The Bible is not studied all through the grades, but God is.—If a child takes the entire course in the school, he will get knowledge of all of the Bible and, what is more important, training in practical religion. He will have learned to have communion with God, will have his moral sense developed, and will be trained to think for himself regarding things religious." A branch of the Y. P. R. U. was organized in connection with this church on October 21st.

RECREATION CORNER.

ENIGMA XXIII.

I am composed of 24 letters.
My 12, 3, 6, 5, is part of a foot.
My 4, 5, 9, 11, is an opening.
My 14, 9, 22, is a boy's name.
My 8, 18, 17, 2, is found inside rushes.
My 10, 7, 13, 24, are parts of the body.
My 21, 23, 20, 1, is one of the points of the compass.
My 10, 9, 22, is an enemy.
My 24, 21, 9, is a numeral.
My 12, 15, 19, 17, 5, 13, 16, is hurries.
My whole is a well-known saying.

ETHEL S. WILLIAMS.

ENIGMA XXIV

I am composed of 17 letters.
My 9, 2, 13, 7, 5, is a dried fruit.
My 1, 10, 3, 16, 17, goes with every purchase.
My 14, 6, 4, is short for a parent.
My 4, 11, 17, 8, conveys the title to land.
My 12, 13, 15, 16, 5, is the extract of fruit.
My whole is a famous novel.

KATHERINE ADAMS.

CHARADE

My first, as a rule, is tall, slender and straight;
It is found in a house, on a street, by a gate;
It is frequently gray, it is frequently white;
It can hold up a box, a wire, or a light.

The shapes of my second are many, and found
On walls, books and slates, trees, windows and ground.

My whole's in the mail; it is round, and it shows
The place where it comes from, but not where it goes.

It's my last, and it comes in my first. Try to see
If you can discover what thing it can be.

YOUTH'S COMPANION.

HIDDEN AUTOMOBILES

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| 1. Noeaptrs. | 5. Twncin. |
| 2. Mrnoam. | 6. Swcetot. |
| 3. Ldnvlcae. | 7. Tmhilcel. |
| 4. Mroacr. | 8. Kfrnmail. |

ERIC ADLARD.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 11.

ENIGMA XX.—A wise son maketh a glad father.
ENIGMA XXI.—Lafayette.
INITIALED PROPHET.—June

Okra
Nira
Arid
Hare—Jonah

A STUDY IN AGES.—1. Cottage. 2. Baggage. 3. Marriage. 4. Message. 5. Cabbage. 6. Selvage. 7. Bondage. 8. Plumage. 8a. Adage. 9. Manage. 10. Steerage. 11. Package. 12. Damage. 13. Peerage. 14. Savage. 15. Presage. 16. Shortage. 17. Pilgrimage. 18. Mortgage. 19. Suffrage.

A DIAMOND.—P
CAT
PILOT
HONESTY
PALESTINE
FEATHER
SPITE
ONE
E

THE BEACON

REV. FLORENCE BUCK, EDITOR.

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